

Testimonials

“Sign me up again. I loved it. A great conference!”

—Selden Edwards, author of the best-selling novel *The Little Book*, writing about the 2016 SFWC.

“You folks run a first-rate conference, yet take the time for the personal response. Thank you!” —Carol Fogel

Dear Mike,

I’m still struggling with the novel, but I took all of your advice and applied it to another book I was writing—a guidebook for teenagers on humility. Anyhow, last week, I signed a contract with the Ignatius Press, which is by far and away the best of the three big Catholic publishers (Ignatius publishes all the Pope’s stuff). So I figure I owe you and the SFWC a big THANK YOU. I shudder to think of my name being in the “self-help” section, but it’s a foot in the door—a big foot.

So thank you very much indeed!

—Augustine Wetta, O.S.B. Director of Chaplaincy, Saint Louis Abbey/Saint Louis Priory School

“One more time. A great conference. I’ve managed and attended conferences internationally (over 30 countries) since the 1960s (I’ll soon be 83) and you and the rest of the staff and volunteers

put on a world-class program.

Thanks so much to all of you. Best regards and looking forward to 2017.”

—Dr Jac Fitzenz

“A big shout-out to the two of you for another fantastic conference!! Thank you so much for including me in the fun again. Everyone I talked to and overheard had nothing but positive and excited comments about their experience. Thanks again.”

—[Martha Alderson](#)

“I have nothing but good things to share about my experience as a volunteer. The poetry offerings are the deal of the decade. Very useful publication information and inspiring workshops.”

—Robin Somers

“We’re on the road in our RV headed back home to Arkansas, and the dust has finally settled from all the wonderful things I heard and learned at the SFWC. After the first day of workshops and sessions I was a bit down as I realized how much I didn’t know. By the second day, I was so excited I couldn’t stand it! I think some of Mike Larsen’s incredible enthusiasm and joyful spirit rubbed off on me. The conference opened a whole new world of stimulation and challenges that I can hardly wait to dive into to make my next book the best ever. Thank you to

all of the ‘village’ who made this conference such a fabulous experience for me and everyone else who attended.”

—Sandra CH Smith

Walt Disney is noted for saying “Our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.” I want to share with you a lovely success story that came out of the 2004 San Francisco Writers Conference

Maggie Parr and I met in a lineup for the Speed Dating session, and, in order to pass the time, we began a lovely conversation that turned into an exchange of business cards and later, an email correspondence and, ultimately, the opportunity to bring to fruition a wonderful children’s book which has just launched this spring.

Maggie is an exceptional artist, who is most known for her work with Disney (she has worked with them for 27 years). Her artwork is featured in Disney parks and galleries around the world. The caricature of a small dragon on her business card is what prompted me to ask her to illustrate my children’s story of British Columbia’s famous lake creature, the Ogopogo. Despite some early interest from a few publishers around 2006-2007, the book was not picked up. In 2014, however, a small press in British Columbia fell in love with the book, and Maggie and I were able to dust off the project and complete it at last.

It's been a delightful collaboration between artist and author and also a wonderful cross-border partnership (Maggie is American, and I am Canadian). *Ogopogo Odyssey* is a children's picture book that tells the summer adventure of a young boy who happens to see the mysterious lake creature, and it changes his life forever. The book has been so well received that we've already sold out of our first print run!

All this to say, that if it weren't for our serendipitous meeting at the San Francisco Writers Conference, this dream would not have come true. I still have such vivid memories of my time there and wanted to let you know how, so many years later, the conference had a lasting impact on my life and my writing career.

Maggie and I were recently interviewed by CBC radio, who also wrote a lovely follow-up article on the book. I've attached the link. I've also attached a link to the book itself on the Promontory Press website.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/ogopogo-odysey-victoria-teacher-works-with-disney-illustrator-to-create-children-s-book-1.3570764>

Thanks again for the inspiration and the connections forged at the SFWC. Perhaps I'll get there again one day!

Best regards,

D. A. Hawes

The 2015 San Francisco Writers Conference: A Wonderful Experience:

It is more than daunting to introduce oneself into the world of authoring, agents, publishers, readers. The 2015 San Francisco Writers Conference offers the possibility to learn, straight from the professionals, about all of the different aspects involved in creating a literary piece, finding an independent editor, selling one's work to a literary agent or publisher, self-publishing, and promoting and marketing this work. After attending the conference I understand much better what agents and publishers are looking for, how they operate, the reader's market, and how writers and their work fall into this stew. This was an intelligent conference, very well planned, and very motivating.

The setting (Intercontinental Mark Hopkins Hotel) is gorgeous, the atmosphere extremely pleasant, and the speakers engaging (in the major plenary sessions, and in the regular sessions). What's more, the demeanor of the participants was on all accounts collegial, and not competitive. I have attended many scientific conferences because of my previous professional track, and was somewhat hesitant to attend this conference: I wasn't clear on how the costs of attending would outweigh the

benefits.

However, I came out of this experience feeling that Michael Larsen, Elizabeth Pomada, and the rest of the organizational team have crafted this conference with the clear goal of facilitating the full development of each individual writer attending the conference. This development addresses the author's needs at whatever stage of the process (from the very beginning to the bitter end), and all of the different aspects involved in becoming a successful writer (with the understanding that the meaning of success may vary from writer to writer). Thank you to the organizers, the volunteers, the speakers, agents, independent editors, and all of the participants I met there for such a wonderful experience.

—María Soledad Sánchez, PhD